

## South Gloucestershire Library Service Annual Report 2015-2016

This report summarises the work of South Gloucestershire Libraries in 2015/16, it highlights the impact we have had on communities and individuals.

### Reading and literacy

**Vital statistic** 1.1 million books issued

**Yate Library** 157,600 books issued

#### Time4Reading

This year the service has been working across South Gloucestershire on the Time4Reading project involving schools (primary and secondary) and the wider community. Schools have developed an award scheme to reward schools who achieve certain criteria, see [www.southglos.gov.uk/time4reading](http://www.southglos.gov.uk/time4reading)

#### Children reading

The work with children and the encouragement of children to read makes South Gloucestershire one of the leading authorities – more children took part in the Summer Reading Challenge per capita than any other library in the South West. The service does work with all ages from pre-school children to teenagers, 44% of books issued are children's books. The Concorde book Award is becoming a highly prestigious award and this year's ceremony was an exciting affair.

Parents said 'The children have always enjoyed the Summer Reading Challenge and happily experiment with a range of different genres. Thanks for taking the time to organise it all! Much appreciated.'

Children said 'It was epic!'



#### Adult reading

To mark the Rugby World Cup libraries supported the regional reading passport, this opened doors to working with Bristol Sport through a longer term relationship both in schools and libraries.

The high profile events and activities are complimented by work within all the communities in engaging people with reading both within the library and in community settings.

In June the LibrariesWest consortium expanded to include Dorset and Poole, providing users with a range of 2 million books to choose from. 'I love to come and browse for a book. I also make a lot of use of the online catalogue and have created a wish list of books. Every so often I order a book from my list and it appears at the library in no time at all!'

### Information service

**Vital statistic** 140,000 enquiries

**Yate Library** 13,315 enquiries

Libraries provide access to information, they are often the first place people will go to for help and staff are able to either provide the answer or refer to another agency or resource. For details of the information service see <http://bit.ly/1rCICEJ>. Many enquiries are straightforward, for example 'Can I have a bus timetable for the bus to Southmead please?' or 'How can I get a Blue Badge?' Other times the enquiries are more involved and personal. With the help of genealogy websites available for free at the library we have helped several people find the missing link in their ancestry.

## Digital literacy

**Vital statistic** 137,000 hours of usage of the computers

**Yate Library** 18,767 hours of usage

**Digital inclusion** is a priority both at local and national level and the service working with Community Learning has trained staff and volunteers to deliver a consistent offer to people wanting support with IT. With the increasing channel shift in all organisations access to IT and staff to support is becoming critical for the success of the digital inclusion plans.

The service was successful in receiving a grant to promote online access and worked with the other community groups in South Gloucestershire to promote access to IT.



Miss M was unable to create an on line CV and use it to apply for jobs on line. With staff assistance she has now become proficient in doing this and can apply on line for jobs unaided. Mr C (aged 75), and not computer literate, needed help to renew his driving licence on line. Staff were able to assist him and he successfully renewed his licence. Mr G has limited IT skills and could not use the new on line Homechoice bidding system until assisted on a couple of occasions by library staff.

## Health and wellbeing

**Vital statistic** 4,000 Books on Prescription titles borrowed

**Yate Library** 447 borrowed

Reading is healthy in its own right but libraries have continued to develop a series of books for specific conditions under the Reading Well Books on Prescription project – this year the dementia collection was launched which included stock for carers, and people experiencing dementia. In addition staff were trained to become health champions in each library. This complements the dementia and mental health arts project and memory cafes hosted in libraries.



Yate Library work closely with Yate Town Council dementia worker Debbie Woolley including training other workers in Yate Shopping Centre about the condition. Re-Mapping, an Arts Council funded creative project for people with either dementia or mental health issues, launched here in April 2015. The feedback from people who attended was very positive and many followed the project when it moved onto Staple Hill library.

## Learning

**Vital statistic** 16,667 hours of formal learning

**Yate Library** 1,963.5 hours

*'There is nowhere quiet to study at home, this is the only place I can come to really focus'*

A student uses the library regularly often all day as she can plug in her laptop and use the Wi-Fi for free. Libraries promote lifelong learning, self-improvement and social mobility and play an important role supporting the educational curriculum with reading for enjoyment. They provide both formal learning programmes working closely with Community Learning and local colleges and informal learning opportunities with people developing their own skills and knowledge through use of IT and books. The service works closely with UWE where users can use their library card to access high level stock. The library workforce provides users with essential support to get the most from available learning opportunities.

They also support the economic growth of the area through providing volunteer opportunities and providing a touch down base for local workers. One gentleman regularly uses this (and other libraries) as a temporary office using the Wifi and taking mobile phone calls. This means he has no office overheads.

## Culture and creativity

**Vital statistic** 9,600 adults and 65,000 children attended events in libraries

**Yate Library** 880 adults and 4,746 children attended events

Libraries enrich the lives of individual and communities through the provision of events, activities and exhibitions helping people gain a sense of place and take pride in their neighbourhoods and communities. The Discover Festival is a major part of our promotion, festival highlights at Yate Library included popular talks on cycling from Lands' End to John O Groats, local history and producing a talking book on CD. There were performances from local bell ringing groups and a brass band – quiet it wasn't! The service also supports national weeks to raise the profile of specific issues such as British Science Week, World Mental Health Day and World Book Night.

## Community

**Vital statistic** 917,743 visits

**Yate Library** 135,707 visits

Libraries are valued safe and neutral spaces where people of all ages are welcomed and participate in a range of activities. The stories behind the visits are powerful testimonies to the value of libraries – *the shy child whose confidence has grown exponentially with the mother attributing this to the half hour Rhymetime sessions, the first time I.T. user in tears during a 1:1 computer session now comfortably accessing our computers, the lonely widower now knowing he can come in any time and just sit and have a chat.* Being based in most main communities enables the service to host the delivery of other services, we work in partnership with Community Learning, Public Health, DWP, and various voluntary sector groups enabling to work with local communities.

In addition libraries can be hired by community groups to ensure use of the building is maximised – users of Yate Library include Community Learning, St Johns Ambulance cadets, Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, Northavon Drivers Association, Job Club, Family and Young Persons services and two carers groups.